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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KRENKEL (Austria)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15. a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 93: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(a) QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (continued) (A/47/214-E/1992/50, A/47/216-E/1992/43, A/47/339, A/47/349, A/47/369, A/47/415; A/C.3/47/4)

(b) CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/47/379, A/47/381, A/47/399 and Corr.1, A/47/87, A/47/232-S/24025 and Corr.1, A/47/356-S/24367, A/47/80-S/23502, A/47/88-S/23563, A/47/312-S/24238, A/47/344, A/47/391)

1. Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile), Special Representative of the Secretary-General, recalled that, in its resolution 1992/27, the Economic and Social Council had recommended that the General Assembly should convene a world summit for social development, at the level of heads of State and/or Government, to be held in early 1995. Since the adoption of that resolution, the interest expressed in the summit, which had received widespread support had continually increased. Nevertheless delegations should not let themselves be carried away by enthusiasm, since the summit would require careful preparation.

2. In the first place, the summit must have the proper approach, and thought should already be given to its outcome. The note by the Secretary-General on the world summit for social development (E/1992/80, paras. 22 and 23) outlined suitable objectives. The summit would be organized with a view to strengthening existing United Nations structures, and no new agency would be established. Secondly, it was essential for the success of the summit that the issues to be addressed by it should be precisely stated, should reflect priority areas and should be of a limited number. In that context, three issues had already emerged: the alleviation and reduction of poverty, the generation of productive employment and the promotion of greater social cohesion. Once the main themes had been decided on, it was important not to define them in too much detail, since what was most important was to formulate the objectives of the summit. Thirdly, lessons should be drawn from the experiences of preparing for the World Summit for Children and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The work of the Commission for Social Development, the high-level debate in the Economic and Social Council and the views of Governments, as expressed in the General Assembly, and of the regional commissions and specialized agencies, should also be utilized. The entire process should culminate in the establishment of a preparatory committee, to be convened probably once in late 1993 and twice in 1994; it should be preceded by an organizational meeting, probably in March or April 1993, to be convened after the meeting of the Commission for Social Development held in Vienna.

3. It would be desirable for the preparatory committee to consist of representatives of heads of State and/or Government, as representation at that level would have the advantage of lending the desired prestige to the

(Mr. Somavia, Chile)

preparatory committee (which should also receive the requisite political support), eliminating jurisdictional disputes among the various technical ministries in charge of social development and ensuring that the prerequisites for the success of the summit had been met (political commitment, technical competence and diplomatic experience on the part of the participants). An administrative unit should be set up within the Secretariat to assist the preparatory committee. He noted that the Danish Government had offered to host the summit in Copenhagen (A/C.3/47/4).

4. The basic assumption should be that the world summit for social development was as important as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and should receive the same level of funding; in other words, the summit should be financed partially from the United Nations regular budget and partially from voluntary contributions, and the funds allocated from the Organization's regular budget should be of the same magnitude as those which had been allocated for the Conference. If the financing of the summit was modelled as closely as possible on that of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, that would avert a political debate over the Organization's priorities, for example, the role of peace-keeping operations as compared to actions to benefit hungry children.

5. Mr. RAVEN (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community, and referring to agenda item 93 (a), said that the profound changes which had occurred during the 1980s and the 1990s had wide economic and social implications which required the adoption of appropriate measures by the international community. There appeared to be general agreement on the objective of balanced and sustainable development, with growing recognition of its linkages with democracy and human rights, and on priority being given to providing the means for self-help.

6. While there was agreement on the need, the possibility and even the means for improving people's living and social conditions, that could be achieved only if developed and developing countries acted jointly. Accordingly, the European Community attached importance to intergovernmental partnerships as well as to collaboration between governments, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and international financial institutions.

7. There were a number of international agreements designed to improve the world social situation. They were all based on the concept of cooperation, including the Lomé Convention, the European Community's generalized system of preferences, its programmes of financial and technical cooperation with Asia and Latin America, the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes adopted by the General Assembly in 1989 and the Paris Declaration and Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. The European Community, which had also traditionally attached great importance to cooperation with developing countries, had endorsed the United Nations target for official development assistance of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP).

(Mr. Raven, United Kingdom)

8. With regard to the proposed world summit on social development, the European Community welcomed the Danish Government's generous offer to host the summit in Copenhagen. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, Member States had pledged themselves to promote higher standards of living, employment and economic and social development. The European Community would play an active role in the preparations for the summit. The summit would provide an opportunity to create greater awareness of the interdependence of economic and social development and greater understanding of ways to achieve sustainable development by protecting the most vulnerable groups in society. The European Community had taken note of the three primary issues which the Secretary-General, in his report to the Economic and Social Council (E/1992/80), had proposed for discussion at the summit: the alleviation and reduction of poverty, the generation of productive employment and the strengthening of social cohesion. The European Community, which was convinced that all people should be encouraged to play a full role in society and should be entitled to benefit from the principles of good governance, would participate actively in the preparation of a cogent agenda.

9. As the European Community had already made statements in plenary meeting on persons with disabilities and on ageing, he turned to the question of youth. The European Community recognized that it was vital for young people to participate in the political, economic, social and cultural life of a country in order to ensure its future development. The momentum created by the International Youth Year in 1985 had declined, and efforts in that area should be revitalized through the formulation of a realistic and pragmatic programme of action towards the year 2000 and beyond, focusing on operational activities designed to involve national and international youth organizations. The European Community again stressed, in that connection, the importance of communication, cooperation and exchanges between young people in developed and developing countries, and between representatives of world-wide youth organizations within the United Nations system.

10. He drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/349), which described the difficulties currently faced by young people, including the shortfall in primary education in the least developed countries, worsening youth unemployment in both developing and developed countries, and threats to the health and well-being of young people: malnutrition, sexually transmitted diseases, including acquired immuno deficiency syndrome (AIDS), alcohol consumption, drug abuse and early marriages and teenage pregnancy.

11. In dealing with those problems, the European Community was continuing to develop action-oriented programmes to promote vocational education and training and the mobility of young people, students and workers, with a view to promoting exchanges of experience among Member States and to facilitating the entry of people under 25 years of age into the labour market.

12. The European Community had welcomed the convening of the World Summit for Children in September 1990 and the adoption by it of the World Declaration on

(Mr. Raven, United Kingdom)

Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan for its Implementation of Action. The European Community was committed to playing a full part in the implementation of the Plan of Action, and it recognized the important role which the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) must play in assisting States to develop national strategies for the achievement of the Summit objectives.

13. The question of street children was another serious problem to which the European Community had devoted attention. Street children were forced by circumstances beyond their control to live on the margins of the adult world. In developing countries, they were the product of rural migration, unemployment, poverty and broken families. In industrialized countries, they were often subject to systematic exclusion. Alone, malnourished, denied affection, education and help, they were often driven by frustration to crime, drug abuse, violence and prostitution. As big cities grew, so did the number of street children; there were now an estimated 30 million of them in the world. The European Community intended to address the issue further in the Third Committee at the current session.

14. With regard to the International Year of the Family, which would take place in 1994, the European Community hoped that it would highlight the crucial role of the family in social development, including the different types of family structure. Adequate preparation was essential in order to ensure the full participation of Governments, specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the general public.

15. Lastly, the European Community, reaffirming the importance which it attached to the question of social justice, drew attention to the European Council's Declaration of June 1991, which stated that respect for human rights, the rule of law and the existence of effective, accountable and democratic political institutions were the basis for equitable development.

16. Mr. WOTAVA (Austria), referring to agenda item 93 (a), said that, as the Chairman had noted in his statement of 29 September 1992, the social problems of mankind continued to increase despite the remarkable efforts undertaken to eradicate them. One billion human beings, or one fifth of the world population, lived in deplorable conditions of poverty. There were now more poor people, more unemployed and greater social insecurity than 10 years earlier, and 40,000 children were still dying each day. Drug abuse, the lack of health services and all forms of crime completed that bleak picture.

17. The social situation was of the utmost importance not only to every individual, but to every State, whose political stability was determined by it. The achievement of world-wide social peace was therefore a collective responsibility which required immediate action. The United Nations system had made every effort so far to improve the situation. In particular, the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and its specialized units had, despite limited personnel and financial resources, produced international

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documents of crucial importance to nearly every human being in the world (for example, the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979, the United Nations Principles for Older Persons adopted by the Commission for Social Development in 1991, the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons and the draft declaration on the elimination of violence against women which had been elaborated by the Commission on the Status of Women in September 1992).

18. All those achievements, however, could not counterbalance the deterioration of the social situation in many areas. Even the world summit for social development, which the United Nations was preparing to convene, would not be able to address all the problems. It would, however, identify priority areas for action and provide Governments with guidelines for ensuring the satisfaction of basic needs and the improvement of the quality of life of people everywhere, through the reduction of poverty and the promotion of employment. It would also increase global consciousness of social problems. Accordingly, Austria was looking forward to that United Nations initiative and would lend its full support to the convening of the summit. In that connection, his delegation welcomed Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/27 of 30 July 1992, the third preambular paragraph of which stressed the importance of involving the concerned organs, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, in particular the Commission for Social Development, in the preparations for the proposed summit.

19. The United Nations had accepted, as a follow-up to the International Youth Year in 1985, the themes of participation, development and peace as the principles of a global strategy for youth. The tenth anniversary in 1995 would be an opportunity to focus world attention on youth issues, in view of the changing international political and economic situation and its impact on young people and their organizations.

20. In the light of those goals, Austria in 1987 had set up a youth employment programme called HOPE '87, which stood for "Hundreds of Original Projects for Employment". The programme was financed basically by the Austrian Federal Government but also more and more by private sponsors. In March 1991, a memorandum of understanding on the promotion of youth employment through HOPE '87 had been signed by Austria and the United Nations Office at Vienna. Close cooperation had also been initiated with the Division of Youth of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and had been concretized in 1992 by the first common project, in Bangladesh, which had been co-financed by UNESCO and HOPE '87. A cooperation agreement had also been concluded with the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe.

21. At the national level, HOPE '87 cooperated in the development and financing of projects with the Fund for Eastern European Countries,

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established by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs, and with the Department for International Cooperation of the Federal Chancellery. With a total budget for the past five years of approximately US$ 1.1 million, HOPE '87 had financed and carried out some 50 projects in 22 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. They had usually been small, income-generating projects for young people from 17 to 30 years of age, with each project providing stable employment to several dozen young people directly and to many more indirectly. The HOPE '87 programme was based on practical assistance through a network of offices and regional coordinators in 20 countries around the world. The initiative had so far created several hundred jobs for young people and, despite budgetary restraints, could be regarded as a very successful attempt to implement some of the guidelines which the United Nations had developed for youth programmes. On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the establishment of HOPE '87, his delegation would welcome all financial or other contributions from Member States and non-governmental organizations; such contributions would expand the possibilities for employment and income for young people through small-scale projects in the third world and in Eastern Europe.

22. Austria, which attached great importance to all developments concerning the family, was paying particular attention to the preparations for and the observance of the International Year of the Family in 1994. At the beginning of 1992, a Committee on the Family had been established at Vienna to coordinate all non-governmental activities for the Year. That non-governmental organization, which had a permanent secretariat at Vienna, had already drawn up a draft action plan.

23. At the national level, Austria had established a special Committee of the Advisory Council for Family Policy; the Council had decided to establish an Austrian national committee for the preparation of the International Year of the Family, to be presided over by the Austrian Federal Minister for the Environment, Youth and Family. Fifteen expert working groups had also been set up to study the themes and priorities defined by the Advisory Council for Family Policy, the main ones being as follows: families and violence, living space, housing, employment, youth, older persons, disabled persons, special burdens, the legal system, health, society, the media and education.

24. Mr. BUTLER (Australia) said that since the Canadian delegation would be speaking on behalf of Canada, New Zealand and Australia on agenda item 93 (b), he would confine his present remarks to item 93 (a) and, more specifically, to preparations for the proposed world summit for social development to be held in 1995. If correctly focused, that summit should contribute to the reform of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, thereby enhancing the capacity of the system to address socio-economic issues and improving the delivery of its social development programmes. The summit should also help to expand international dialogue and cooperation between national agencies responsible for social policy development. The United Nations must be active in the three areas identified by the Charter, namely, security of States,

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economic cooperation and humanitarian and social development. The high-level segment of the recent session of the Economic and Social Council had recognized the indivisible link between peace and security on the one hand and economic and social development on the other, while the Secretary-General had noted that any structure built to deal with threats to international peace and security would be unworkable if it did not rest on a foundation of economic health, growth and development and social welfare of peoples. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund had also stressed the need for growth and structural development policies to be accompanied by sound social policies. The international community must help to provide security to individuals and families, as the Security Council had acknowledged at its January 1992 Summit Meeting, when it had drawn attention to non-military threats to peace and security (narcotic drugs, AIDS, environment and employment). The United Nations could be likened to a stool with three legs: the Security Council was working on the security leg; the second leg - a revitalized and effective set of economic institutions - was being worked on by the Ad Hoc Working Group set up by the Economic and Social Council in July 1992; and work had begun on the third leg - community - with the reform of United Nations drug control programmes and the development of United Nations human rights machinery. Those efforts notwithstanding, it was clear that the development gap had grown wider and that poverty was one of the gravest problems confronting the world. Infant mortality, public health, education and employment were all determinants of the standard of living to which all human beings aspired for themselves and their families. The world summit for social development would be an opportunity to reflect on ways of achieving the objectives of social development and social justice both nationally and internationally. Many tools, guidelines, strategies, standards, plans of action and principles for promoting effective and sustainable social development already existed at the international level. What was lacking was effective implementation. The task therefore was not to create new mechanisms but to enhance and better coordinate existing programmes and to take coherent action throughout the United Nations system as well as through national Governments. There was broad support for a world summit for social development: several United Nations agencies had been re-evaluating the general direction of their policies and programmes and looking for more effective strategies to achieve their goals. The agenda for the summit was potentially very large. It was important therefore to prepare well and to avoid an unfocused and hence weakened approach. Certain key areas should be identified which the international community could agree were of concern to all and from which individual Member States could derive benefit when they came to develop their own national social welfare policies. Those directly responsible for formulating and implementing social policy should therefore be actively involved, from the outset, in preparations for the summit, so that countries could have a fruitful exchange of views and learn about each other's experiences.

25. Of the three key priorities mentioned by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General - poverty alleviation, increased employment and social cohesion - his country had found that social cohesion was fundamental to

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effective and sustained social development. Although difficult to define, social cohesion could be stimulated or enhanced by a range of government policies. The United Nations too could stimulate social cohesion through its interdisciplinary and multidimensional approach, and had already done so on a number of occasions. The UNCED process, for instance, had highlighted the role of women in achieving ecologically sustainable development, while the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provided a solid framework for policy implementation. Many other standards and guidelines complemented national policies in the areas of health, population, human rights, work practices, crime and development assistance. At its two special sessions devoted to disabled persons and to ageing, the General Assembly had sent a clear message as to the usefulness of the policy framework provided by the United Nations and had emphasized the value of national policies based on the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the International Plan of Action on Ageing. One key objective of the summit would, in his delegation's view, be to integrate those existing standards and guidelines into all policies and programmes delivered by the United Nations. The summit might also help to draw attention to the need to channel appropriate national resources to social development in order to avoid poverty, unemployment, crime and corruption, homelessness, ghettos, marginalization, discrimination and xenophobia.

26. Ms. OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso), speaking on item 93 (a), said that on the eve of the twenty-first century, despite all the talk of a new world order, an objective analysis of the world social situation yielded a very grim picture. Three quarters of human kind lived in deprivation and ignorance, and 20 per cent of the world's population controlled 83 per cent of global earnings while the poorest 20 per cent shared only 1.4 per cent.

27. Africa was coping with natural disasters that were compounded by the adverse effects of the international economic crisis, the external debt burden, customs and tariff barriers and rapid population growth. It still had to follow the course stipulated by structural adjustment programmes however, with no visible results.

28. The right to development was an inalienable human right and questions relating to the human person and his or her well-being were fundamental to the attainment of sustainable development. Social development programmes should never separate economic and social issues, for those two aspects were inextricably linked: lack of financial resources had often hindered the implementation of social programmes, and the success of social programmes helped to enhance the economic situation. In order to ensure economic and social development, people must be given the means to attain food self-sufficiency and also access to housing, drinking water, health services, education and information in a healthy environment so that each group in society, without distinction, could live a healthy, free, balanced and peaceful life.

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29. The family was the foundation of all social development. Her country had just adopted a new code of the individual and the family, eliminating retrograde practices which did not recognize certain rights of women and children. Moreover, in the context of the International Year of the Family, a national interministerial committee was preparing a plan of action for family well-being.

30. Her delegation welcomed the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing, and also the adoption of the draft resolution containing the Proclamation on Ageing aimed at integrating older persons into development projects and programmes, in which it was decided to observe 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons (A/47/L.5/Rev.1). It should be noted, however, that by bringing forward retirement age, the structural adjustment programmes which developing countries were being forced to implement were producing more and more "young retirees" (retirement age was 53 in Burkina Faso) who, being still in the prime of life, must return to active life in order to promote development.

31. Young people were a social group that had its own identity, needs and particular problems. They also represented hope and therefore required special attention. Young people must be educated, trained and integrated into the development process. Today they numbered more than 1.12 billion throughout the world and more than 833 million were in developing countries. In those countries, the problems of unemployment and underemployment of young people were particularly acute, especially in Africa where students finishing advanced studies joined the already high number of persons unemployed because of illiteracy, economic stagnation and the lack of persons unemployed because of illiteracy, economic stagnation and the lack of professional qualifications. The lack of work gave rise to juvenile delinquency and increased crime (robbery, drug abuse and trafficking, and prostitution), not to mention the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. Education and training for all therefore were still an objective to be achieved in a number of developing countries where the illiteracy rate was still too high among rural young people.

32. Burkina Faso, a country with an 80 per cent rate of illiteracy, was aware of the fact that educating young people and adults was necessary for development. A study conducted in connection with the International Literacy Day revealed that 8,874 literacy centres had taken part in the training of 266,220 young people and adults in the management of mills, village pharmacies, shops and cooperatives and also in the area of health. Women were encouraged to participate in those programmes. Furthermore, public action projects for educational purposes had been set up to establish a network for instruction, communication and dialogue with street youth. Although the coordination mechanisms recommended in the main guidelines of the International Youth Year in order to better integrate problems affecting young people in national development plans had not functioned because of a lack of financial resources, their implementation remained indispensible. The preparations for the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year should help

(Ms. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

improve the situation of young people through consideration and an in-depth evaluation of the measures taken to develop capacities in the field of planning and execution at all levels and the formulation of a realistic and practical world programme of action for the medium and long term. In August 1992, Burkina Faso had hosted the regional Conference on African Youth, aimed at laying down strategies to ensure the well-being of those young people, whose critical situation required that steps should be taken to encourage, develop and support policies and programmes for their benefit.

33. Under resolution 37/52, the General Assembly had adopted the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and proclaimed the period 1983-1992 as the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. Nevertheless, at the end of the Decade, it was clear that the success rate for achieving the objectives of the Programme of Action (prevention, readaptation and ensuring equality of opportunity) had been very low, and even imperceptible in some countries. People had nevertheless become aware of the situation of the disabled and their right not to be marginalized.

34. One could only deplore the fact that during the Decade, the number of disabled persons had increased because of wars, violence, disease, hunger, malnutrition and poverty. It would be possible to implement the Programme of Action in developing countries only through increased international cooperation.

35. In Burkina Faso, the national policy for the social and economic reintegration of disabled persons had succeeded in reviving a spirit of solidarity. Micro-projects providing support for the disabled had been put into operation. Although responsibility was taken for disabled persons and they were organized in associations and benefited from social assistance and bank loans in order to engage in economic activity, much still remained to be done.

36. Her delegation welcomed the holding of the plenary meetings of the General Assembly marking the end of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and the adoption of the draft resolution (A/47/L.4), proclaiming 3 December as the International Day of Disabled Persons. It was hoped that observance of the Day would be an opportunity to carry out an annual assessment of the actions undertaken.

37. At a time when the social situation was worsening in developing countries (deterioration of living conditions, continued existence and growth of poverty, and plummeting of the main social and economic indicators), the causes of those negative trends and the circumstances underlying them should be analysed in detail.

38. The report of the Secretary-General on the world social situation should, in 1993, analyse the impact of the economic problems of developing countries on the world social situation and consider the relationship between economic

(Ms. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

growth and development. In that connection, her delegation welcomed the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/27, which recommended the convening of a world summit for social development at the beginnning of 1995,

39. The preparatory meetings for the summit should take stock of the various obstacles impeding social development and elaborate a strategy for action programmes by taking account of the different national and regional contexts. It would also be necessary to find low-cost solutions, consider the concept of self-sufficiency and strengthen regional cooperation in order to promote trade. Furthermore, the holding of the world summit should not entail heavy expenses, which would subsequently compromise, as had frequently happened in the past, the implementation of the plan of action owing to a lack of financial resources.

40. Her delegation believed that a good start would be made by giving the United Nations a central role. In that connection, the major world conferences on human rights, women, preparations for the International Year of the Family, the world summit for social development, the World Summit for Children and the World Conference on Environment and Development would make it possible to draw up and implement strategies aimed at ensuring social well-being so that people would be able to have a better future.

41. Mr. SUAZO (Honduras), speaking on behalf of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, wished at the outset to express the solidarity of the peoples of Central America with the peoples of Egypt and Colombia in connection with the natural disasters that had just struck those countries.

42. Central America had just experienced one of the most important crises in its history, a crisis that had been resolved in favour of democracy in the region. The Central American countries had succeeded in reconciling points of view that they had earlier regarded as incompatible and, in spite of profound internal divisions, were working together to promote reconciliation and implement joint policies in all sectors - including social development, to which they gave particular attention.

43. Referring to the various ongoing and planned activities of United Nations bodies in the field of social development, the importance of which he underscored in so doing, the representative of Honduras said that the countries of Central America supported the holding, in Cairo in 1994, of the International Conference on Population and Development. Those countries had been the first to take a firm decision in favour of convening, in 1995, a world summit for social development and were committed to playing an active role in the consideration of the question by the General Assembly at its current, forty-seventh session. They hoped that the summit would be an opportunity for leading Member States to commit themselves to making the individual the focal point of plans for development and international cooperation.

(Mr. Suazo, Honduras)

44. The Central American countries took note of the offer by Denmark to host the world summit for social development. They shared the view of the Secretary-General that democracy exercised in a framework of openness and honesty, an independent judicial branch, respect for law and domestic peace were essential for economic progress and lasting social progress, and welcomed the holding, in Vienna in 1993 of the World Conference on Human Rights.

45. Despite the multilateral and bilateral programmes of technical and financial cooperation put into effect by United Nations bodies and certain friendly Governments, living conditions had continued to deteriorate in some Central American countries, as they had in most developing countries. Those countries had to make great sacrifices to give priority to social development policies, a task made particularly difficult by their foreign debt, economic readjustment programmes, reduced market access for their products, tariff barriers, the imposition of restrictive quota systems and the absence of appropriate modern technology. The Central American countries continued nevertheless to implement social development programmes aimed for the most part at creating large numbers of jobs and promoting and financing projects for infrastructure, education, health, nutrition and waste water treatment. The resources received from abroad were managed with professional skill and with an eye to honesty and transparency by social investment funds.

46. Because of their increasingly worrisome situation, the Central American countries had decided, at their tenth summit meeting held in El Salvador, to work to raise the peoples' standard of living. That was essential not only for developing their human resources but also for achieving sustainable economic development. They had also decided, at their eleventh summit meeting held at Tegucigalpa, to promote human development by encouraging the participation of each individual in national development efforts and to set clearly defined priorities and objectives. As part of the follow-up to those two summit meetings, the Governments of the Central American countries had drawn up national plans of action in which they set targets for social development and undertook to achieve them by mobilizing and allocating the necessary resources. They hoped they would be supported in their regional effort by the international community and would thus be able to attain the objectives set forth in Article 55 of the Charter: "higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development".

47. Mr. DAHA (Pakistan) said that the capacity of developing countries to attain their basic social objectives was seriously affected by poverty, the debt problem and structural adjustment. Their actions in the areas of health, food, education, housing and poverty eradication were the first to be affected by the structural adjustment policies imposed on them by multilateral financial institutions. The most vulnerable groups - women, children, youth, the aged and the underprivileged - were the first to suffer.

48. He shared the view that the deterioration in standards of living and social conditions during the 1980s needed to be arrested and inequalities

(Mr. Daha, Pakistan)

removed. However, that raised some fundamental questions: had the developing countries the potential to create an economic environment similar to that achieved by the developed countries? Did the loans and other forms of aid provided by the developed countries really help the developing countries? Could the United Nations provide a sense of security to developing countries so that they would divert some of their expenditures on defence to the social sector? How could the developing countries arrest the uncontrolled growth of urban slums? How could social, ethical and moral values be protected in the face of commercialized mass culture? The developing countries were beginning to realize that one way out of their dilemma lay in adopting austerity measures and reducing their dependence on foreign assistance. However, that policy was not without difficulties, since the peoples of developing countries rightfully aspired to the living conditions of the developed countries, as projected by the mass media. Narrowing the gap between rich and poor was an essential prerequisite for a stable world order.

49. Given their resource constraints, developing countries must direct their national social development policies towards specific groups and objectives. Pakistan had identified, as target groups for its social welfare projects, children, women, youth, the disabled, widows, orphans, senior citizens, the destitute, prisoners and ex-convicts, migrants and refugees. It had formulated a social action programme for human resources and social development for the period 1993-1998, the objectives of which were: making access to primary education universal, with the participation rate for boys and girls increased from the current 87 per cent and 54.5 per cent to 100 per cent and 90 per cent respectively; decentralizing the public health sector and creating a balance between prevention, treatment and health promotion; reducing the population growth rate from 3.1 per cent to 2.5 per cent per annum by the end of the century; making potable water supply available to 100 per cent and 90 per cent of the urban and rural population respectively, and sanitation facilities to 90 per cent and 75 per cent of urban and rural inhabitants; allocating 1 per cent of GNP to pollution control and environmental protection; and, lastly, implementing a master plan for national narcotics control.

50. Turning to the three reports of the Secretary-General on crime prevention and criminal justice (A/47/379, A/47/381 and A/47/399), he noted that the fight against international organized crime called for a truly international approach. While Pakistan was strongly in favour of increased cooperation in that field, it felt that there was a need to address the socio-economic inequities which were often the underlying cause of most common crimes. Emphasis needed to be given to assisting the developing countries in implementing their economic and social development programmes in improving their national machinery for crime prevention and control by providing them with the financial and other means needed for that purpose.

51. with regard to disabled persons, Pakistan agreed as to the necessity of a shift from awareness-raising to action with the aim of achieving a society for all by the year 2010, and looked forward to the finalization of the draft

(Mr. Daha, Pakistan)

long-term strategy to implement the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons beyond the Decade and the draft standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons.

52. With regard to ageing, Pakistan had supported the endorsement by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session of the action programme on ageing for 1992 and beyond. Although problems associated with ageing were not so acute in Pakistan, because of the close-knit family system and community living, the Government had taken a number of steps in that connection: a national committee on ageing had prepared a national plan of action aimed at enabling the ageing population to enjoy a life of fulfilment, health and security in their own families and communities.

53. Aware of its responsibility towards young people and the potential they represented, his Government had established a youth investment promotion society whose main purpose was to tackle unemployment among educated youth by providing technical assistance and guidance and soft loans for education. The Government had also established vocational training units and socio-economic centres to equip young people with skills enabling them to obtain gainful employment.

54. His delegation supported the proposal for convening a world summit for social development in 1995. It hoped that the Assembly would adopt that proposal at its current session and would initiate a meaningful preparatory process, which took into account all aspects of and obstacles to social development.

55. Mrs. KABA CAMARA (Côte d'Ivoire) said that the conclusion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing had made it possible to take stock of the progress made in some parts of the world and the scant results achieved in developing countries in two areas that complemented each other, the main object being to provide equal opportunities for all, regardless of age or physical condition. The report in document A/47/339 proposed eight global targets for the year 2001 with a view to encouraging the integration of people over the age of 60 into the development process. Given the increasing number of elderly persons, 80 per cent of whom lived in the developing countries, there was an urgent need to review social structures and retirement systems which rendered unproductive men and women who could offer both experience and maturity.

56. The United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons had made Member States aware that physical or mental disability should not prevent a person from playing a full role in society. The long-term, step-by-step national affirmative action plan for disabled persons for the period 1993-2002, proposed by the United Nations, aimed to translate that awareness into concrete action. The United Nations Centre for Social Development and

(Mrs. Kaba Camara, Côte d'Ivoire)

Humanitarian Affairs at Vienna, despite its modest resources, had been able to give Member States the assistance they needed to guarantee their social progress.

57. Social progress, however, also demanded that the population as a whole be assured of a minimum of social well-being. According to the draft 1993 report on the world social situation (E/1992/17), the declining economic and social situation in a large number of developing countries in Africa and Latin America in particular had continued to worsen. Impoverishment had increased under the combined effects of the debt burden, the net transfer to the North of the meagre resources of countries in those regions, the dwindling financial flows to those countries and budgetary restructuring which was prejudicial to social services.

58. While it was true that economic development furthered social progress, it was equally true that, without a healthy and educated population, there could be no development. In preparing for the world summit for social development, it would have to be remembered that people were both the end and the means of development. Above all, attention would have to be given to ways of combating poverty and ensuring that everyone enjoyed a minimum standard of well-being. To that end, development agencies and the industrialized countries would have to be encouraged to increase their financial commitment; without a net inflow of external resources to the developing countries, it would be impossible to create the right social conditions for economic recovery.

59. As emphasized in document E/1922/80, the summit would ensure that the individual became the focus of development activities. In order to achieve that objective fully, poverty could be combated by investing in such social sectors as universal basic education, primary health care and preventive medicine, sanitation and drinking-water supply, and nutrition. Unemployed people could be encouraged to establish small units or cooperatives with a view to undertaking income-generating activities in such sectors as commerce, transportation, handicrafts, livestock-rearing, food crops and fishing. Local development banks, financed by international institutions, foundations and development agencies, would grant them short-term loans. Those simple measures would help to combat mounting unemployment, which was the main cause of poverty, to create solid bases for economic and social development and to enhance the social well-being of populations, which would then be better able to contribute effectively to sustainable development.

60. Mr. HAAKONSEN (Denmark), welcoming the Chilean initiative which had led to the adoption by the Economic and Social Council of a proposal to convene a world summit for social development in 1995, said that his Government had decided to offer Copenhagen as the venue for the summit and awaited with interest the General Assembly's decision on the matter. In extending that invitation, his Government had confirmed Denmark's commitment to social development as an important part of international cooperation and its

(Mr. Haakonsen, Denmark)

intention to ensure that the summit was a significant event in the mobilization of all efforts to attain the ultimate objective of improving the quality of life.

61. In the opinion of his Government, the summit should devote particular attention to three areas. In the first area, the alleviation of poverty, particularly among disadvantaged groups such as women, children, youth, the elderly and disabled persons, the focus should be on practical contributions, such as national policies aimed at reducing the vulnerability of the poor to economic shocks, thereby promoting individual security; on the promotion of human development enabling individuals to make decisions about their own needs and ways of meeting them; on the link between poverty and the lack of power to choose; and on ways of furthering the contribution of the United Nations system to poverty alleviation. In the second area, productive employment, the focus should be on the need to promote human development through the provision of improved, demand-led education systems, including basic literacy, skills training and health care. Special consideration should be given to ways of enhancing the integration of disabled persons in the labour market and women's participation in economic activities, and to designing economic reform programmes which favoured the productive capacity of poor people and individual entrepreneurship, as well as the role which the United Nations system could play in that respect. In the third area, social cohesion, the focus should be on creating a social environment which, by taking into account access to information, democratic participation and the accountability of public administration, would enable individuals to share in the benefits of economic growth.

62. Mr. TISSOT (United Kingdom), speaking on agenda item 93 (b) on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community, said that the rule of law and the effective administration of justice were at the heart of democratic society. Rising crime rates threatened the security, stability and democratic development of society. It was not merely the responsibility of Governments or the criminal justice system to fight that situation; the whole community should be involved. Crime prevention and control required flexible responses and international cooperation in the exchange of information.

63. In that context, the Twelve welcomed the Ministerial Meeting on the Creation of an Effective United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, held at Versailles from 21 to 23 November 1991, which had led to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 46/152 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/1 and to the establishment of the intergovernmental Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice which, at its first session held from 21 to 30 April 1992, had laid particular emphasis on practical steps towards the implementation of internationally agreed standards and on the prioritization of its objectives, as outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/22.

(Mr. Tissot, United Kingdom)

64. The Twelve continued to monitor the implementation of existing norms and standards, the effectiveness of which should be enhanced by the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme. The programme should also tackle organized and economic crime through the provision of technical assistance in training for civilian policing and in drafting legislation. Its objectives should be prioritized to ensure that its limited resources were used to the greatest effect to achieve sustainable results. Its organizational capacity should also be strengthened. The Twelve attached particular importance to the fight against national and transnational crime, particularly organized crime; the fight against crime, particularly juvenile and urban crime; assistance to countries in the process of democratization; and the fight against corruption.

65. The Twelve believed that a sound system for the administration of justice was fundamental to the achievement of human rights and continued to stress the importance of implementing international commitments. They therefore welcomed the recent Helsinki follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the decision taken by the Conference to strengthen a regular cycle of implementation reviews.

66. European Community interior and justice ministers, meeting at London on 18 September 1992, had decided to set up within the existing structures of cooperation a working group made up of police and judicial experts to report to the ministers on the organization and structures of the Mafia and other international criminal organizations.

67. The Community and its member States were continuing to develop mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and police and customs cooperation. The Judicial Cooperation Working Group was working to improve mutual legal assistance in order to combat terrorism, drug trafficking, money laundering and organized crime. It was also taking practical steps to facilitate the provision of mutual legal assistance, conclude agreements on the transfer of criminal proceedings and the transfer of the enforcement of prison sentences and fines, simplify and improve extradition procedures between member States and study the scope provided in the criminal justice systems of member States for tackling the problem of terrorist funding.

68. The Community and its member States were in the forefront of international action to combat money laundering. The European Community's directives in that area set standards to be followed by financial institutions to guard against that practice (customer identification, record keeping, disclosure of suspicious or unusual transactions to the enforcement authorities, and lifting of customer confidentiality where disclosures were made). All the member States of the European Community were also members of the Financial Action Task Force, which had carried out useful work since its establishment in 1989 and had made progress in implementing the Task Force's 40 recommendations. It was essential that as many countries as possible should adopt those recommendations so that it would become increasingly difficult for criminals to infiltrate financial systems.

(Mr. Tissot, United Kingdom)

69. The European Community urged all States to ratify the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and States entitled to do so to ratify the 1990 Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime; it called on all States to cooperate fully under existing relevant international instruments and, where necessary, to create new bilateral or regional instruments on the basis of the model treaties developed in the United Nations and adopted by the General Assembly.

70. Mr. YBOKOU (Togo) said that, according to available statistics, one fifth of the world population lived in conditions of extreme poverty. As the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development had noted in his introductory statement, the gap in standards of living between the richest and poorest was wider than it had been ten years previously. The developing countries, which accounted for 77 per cent of the world's population, produced and consumed only 17 per cent of world output. Poverty was one of the main characteristics of such countries. In contrast to Latin America, there had been no signs of economic recovery in Africa; 32 of the 47 least developed countries of the world were situated in Africa, and it was the only low-income region where the number of inhabitants living in poverty was liable to increase by the year 2000 if current trends continued. Africa was also the only region where the aggregate debt was equal to or greater than economic production.

71. In an attempt to re-establish overall economic balance and generate a level of growth that would make it possible to finance development, Togo had undertaken to implement three rigorous structural adjustment programmes; the result had been a decline in jobs in the public and private sectors, the closure of unprofitable State enterprises, the freezing of salaries, large-scale emigration from rural areas, increase in the school drop-out rate and in juvenile delinquency and increased marginalization of certain sectors of the population, particularly in the rural areas.

72. Since the efforts that were being made by developing countries to ensure the economic and social well-being of their populations were being jeopardized by the adverse effects of the international economic system, it was increasingly important for the social dimensions of development to be taken into account in all new plans at the national, regional and international levels. In that respect, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal that the United Nations should have an early-warning system to identify any threat to the security and well-being of the peoples, whether because of the debt burden, the risk of famine or the spread of disease. It also welcomed the Secretary-General's desire to see the establishment of a new partnership for development.

73. Africa in general, and Togo in particular, attached great importance to the improvement of the situation of the elderly, who were traditionally regarded as custodians of the cultural heritage and wisdom of their

(Mr. Ybokou, Togo)

countries. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's recommendation concerning the adoption by the General Assembly of global targets on ageing for the year 2001. The Secretariat of the United Nations and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs should strengthen their coordinating role with a view to achieving those global targets.

74. With regard to disabled persons, the Secretary-General's proposals should be considered very carefully, particularly those regarding the formulation of a system-wide plan of action to promote and coordinate policies and programmes to benefit the disabled.

75. His delegation welcomed the decision taken by the United Nations to celebrate in 1995 the tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year, an occasion which should enable the international community to consider once again the disturbing situation of youth throughout the world, to evaluate the measures already taken in that respect and to formulate a realistic and pragmatic world youth programme of action with the year 2000 and beyond in view.

76. The international community must pay attention to the deplorable state of social development in the developing countries and, for the sake of the survival of mankind, must show more active solidarity and develop greater cooperation.

77. Mr. GARCIA (Chile) said that since the endorsement by the General Assembly, in resolution 42/125, of the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes, those principles, as noted by the Secretary-General in his report on the subject, had acquired increased significance in view of the fact that for several decades the world social situation had undergone far-reaching changes giving rise to new problems and new opportunities in the area of the family, social security, the role of women and awareness of the need to bring into the mainstream of society all marginalized groups such as the elderly, young people and the disabled. There had also been a change in the role of the State in relation to those problems, particularly through the interaction of economic and social policy and the interaction of the State and society at large, and also decentralization and modernization of the social sector.

78. Now that the political barriers dividing countries had been dismantled, it was time to confront the challenge posed by the social barriers that continued to set individuals apart. The dignity of the human being, like international peace and security, required social action within each country, as well as international relations, to be based on the criteria of justice and solidarity. It was thus entirely timely to make a discussion of such guiding principles part of the preparatory process for the world summit for social development, since those principles constituted an exercise in collective thinking about problems which, since they were common to all of mankind, required solutions acceptable to all and called, in particular, for an

(Mr. Garcia, Chile)

examination of the role which the United Nations, with its vast experience in the social field, could play in ensuring the adoption of the measures needed at regional and international levels.

79. In the two years following the restoration of democracy in Chile, the country had shown that growth, social justice and increased participation of its citizens could be mutually reinforcing in improving the quality of life.

80. First of all, with regard to economic growth, the gross national product would increase in 1992 by 8 per cent, which should make it possible to achieve an average annual growth rate of 5 to 6 per cent during the current Government's term of office. That progress had been achieved through internationalization of the Chilean economy. Chile had unilaterally reduced its customs tariffs to a single rate of 11 per cent and had made progress in concluding bilateral free-trade agreements with various South American countries. Chile's economic stability was due to a strengthening in the market economy in which the private sector was the driving-force for development while the Government saw to the protection of the common heritage. The inflation rate was less than half that which the Government in office had inherited from its predecessor. The budget balance and the external account were in surplus, and national savings were financing an increase in the rate of investment. The soundness of those macroeconomic balances had attracted a growing inflow of foreign investment.

81. While growth was a necessary condition for progress, it was not enough. The country must also settle its "social debt" to the thousands of impoverished Chileans who had seen their living conditions deteriorate during the initial phases of the implementation of an adjustment programme aimed at achieving specific economic objectives. That was primarily a problem of defining the relationship between macroeconomic success and its specific impact on everyday life. In Chile, more than a third of the population still lived in poverty. The market economy alone could not offer poor people the opportunity to share in the fruits of progress. Thus, if the quality of life of that segment of the population did not improve, social divisions, which were a source of conflict and instability, would persist.

82. Government intervention in the social field and solidarity among the people were essential in eliminating poverty and achieving the social cohesion without which no country nowadays could make progress. Moreover, not only was there a political responsibility and a moral duty to alleviate the poverty in which millions of Chileans lived - to do so would also be to invest in development.

83. It was for that reason that the current Government had adopted a tax reform which had increased human investment by more than 30 per cent, within the framework of programmes aimed at improving the quality of services in the fields of health, education, housing and social security and equality of access to those services, while increasing the opportunities for small and

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medium-sized enterprises, the objective being to ensure that all Chileans would share in development. The Government had also undertaken a reform of the labour laws with the aim of introducing greater justice in relations between employers and workers. The decline in the unemployment rate, which was lower than 5 per cent and strengthening of vocational training programmes had brought about an increase in labour productivity and, consequently, in wages. The incomes of workers had thus increased annually by 5 per cent in real terms, and by more than that in the case of the poorest, since the minimum wage had increased twice as fast as the national average. All those changes had been made possible by the consensus reached by the Government and the employers' and trade union organizations with regard to the pace of development towards greater equality and greater social justice, a consensus which would ensure that the gains achieved in those fields would be lasting.

84. That progress had made it possible to distribute the fruits of progress more equally. It was also anticipated that the growth together with income redistribution would bring about a reduction of 20 to 25 per cent in the incidence of poverty during the first four years of the current Government's term of office, which would at the same time improve the quality of life of all Chileans. If the current trend continued, by the twenty-first century Chile would have conquered extreme poverty and markedly improved the prospects of low-income groups.

85. Chileans had also benefited from constitutional reforms which were decentralizing and dispersing power and enabling individuals and their organizations to participate in decision-making. For the first time in its history Chile had regional governments possessing resources of their own to tackle the priority objectives established by democratically elected regional councils. Similarly, social organizations could now participate in the administration of municipalities and authorize the allocation of a large part of public resources for the purposes of social development. The process of decentralization had strengthened society by making individuals responsible for their own development and collective progress.

86. Chile still had a long way to go in fulfilling its national responsibilities, which went well beyond the mandate of any particular Government and involved all the country's inhabitants. It was they who, in the final analysis, held the key to the future; it was their solidarity which would make it possible to give effect to the social and political agreements and to pursue integration with the rest of the world. The importance which Chile attached to the convening of a world summit for social development, which had already obtained the support of 120 other countries, was due to the opportunity which it would offer for focusing world attention on the human person and for forging the political and economic agreements needed to eliminate poverty, thus enabling all to share in the benefits of progress. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the Danish proposal to hold the summit at Copenhagen.

87. The CHAIRMAN invited the members of the Third Committee to demonstrate their commitment to the objectives of social development by considering the possibility of establishing a Third Committee fund for Somalia. The officers of the Committee, and two or three representatives of each regional group, might meet for that purpose.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.